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Subject: Portugal opens criminal investigation into alleged CIA flights

Report: Portugal opens criminal investigation into alleged CIA flights

LISBON - Portugal's attorney general is opening a criminal investigation into claims that CIA flights, some of them allegedly carrying terror suspects, made stopovers in the country, a senior official said Monday, according to a news report. The investigation had "many leads" to pursue after a Portuguese deputy at the European Parliament presented a dossier of allegations, Deputy Attorney General Candida Almeida said, according to state-owned news agency Lusa. "Before, we had no indications (of a crime), but the complaints we have received show areas we might explore," Almeida was quoted as saying.

Officials at the attorney general's office were not immediately available for comment. Authorities often use the Lusa agency to make official announcements. Ana Gomes, a European Parliament deputy, met with the attorney general last week and said she gave him evidence that dozens of CIA planes had landed in Portugal, some of them flying to or from the U.S. military prison for terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay. Gomes said she collected statements from witnesses who claimed to have seen handcuffed prisoners at an airport in Portugal's mid-Atlantic Azores Islands. She also alleged that local authorities knew Portugal was being used for CIA flights. Last week, Foreign Minister Luis Amado said authorities had not unearthed any evidence of CIA flights and would not investigate the matter further. (AP, 2/5)

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